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No. VI.

LETTERING MARBLE.

The SILVER MEDAL *was presented to Mr. C. H.* PAGE, *of the United States, for his Method of Lettering on Polished Marble; Specimens of which are placed in the Society's Repository.*

THE lettering on marble is, for the most part, confined to monumental inscriptions. For this purpose, the surface of the stone is first polished, and the letters are then cut on it by a chisel, and afterwards covered with black varnish, in order to make them more legible. According to Mr. Page's statement, it is not unfrequent for the letterers (who form a distinct class of workmen) to content themselves with roughing out the letters in the marble, and to finish them up by pencilling on the blacking. Such letters, after exposure for some weeks to the air and weather, become illegible in consequence of the blacking having given way in the superficial parts.

Another method, practised chiefly in the country, is to cut the letters perfectly in the marble, and then to cover the space between the letters by some varnish impenetrable to the blacking, after which the blacking is laid on with a broad brush, working it well into the letters. When the blacking has become dry, the surface is to be rubbed with pumice or water of Ayr stone, which removes the blacking and varnish from the face of the marble, without doing any injury to the lettering if proper care is taken. The surface of the marble must, however, in this case, either be left unpolished or be polished after the lettering; to which latter there are considerable practical objections.

A third method, sometimes applied to marble previously polished, is to cover the letters and spaces between them with black varnish, and, before the varnish has become dry, to remove it from the surface by rubbing it with a piece of cork, or with an edge of soft brass, which will take the blacking off the surface without injuring its polish. This method, however, is applicable only to very dense and fine-grained marble; for if the surface be porous or flawed, the blacking will sink into the spaces, and cannot be got out.

The method proposed by Mr. Page, and practised by him, first at New York, and afterwards when he was in the employ of Mr. Brown, of University Street, is as follows: —

Mix size and whiting to a rather stiff mass, and cover with it the surface of the polished marble, the letters having been cut in it after polishing; then, by means of a brush, work the blacking into the letters, the sized surface being of necessity blacked at the same time. The coat of size prevents the surface, even if porous, from absorbing any of the blacking; and when this latter has become dry and hard, by applying the tool of soft brass, either dry or wet, to the surface, both the blacking and size will be readily removed, without injury to the letters, or to the whiteness and polish of the surface. The size, by filling the pores at the edge of the letters, prevents the blacking from soaking through the margin, and thus giving a grey, undefined boundary,—an imperfection to which inscriptions on porous marble are very liable; whereas Mr.

Page's method preserves the original whiteness of the marble close up to the edge of the letters.

Mr. Page lays no claim to any novelty in the composition of the blacking. That first used by him he imported from New York; but he has since got blacking quite as good from Mr. Mytton, of Vauxhall Road.

Specimens of his method of lettering on marble were shewn in its different stages to the Committee, as well as its successful application to inscriptions on Portland stone; this being one of the most porous stones on which inscriptions are ever cut.

No. VII.

NIGHT SIGNALS FOR RIVER STEAMERS.

The SILVER ISIS MEDAL *was presented to Mr. M.* JENNING, *Portsmouth Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, for his Night Signals for Steamers; a Model of which has been placed in the Society's Repository.*

THE apparatus or telegraph consists of an upright about six or seven feet high, having a cross-piece near the top capable of moving on a central pin fixed in the upright. At the end of each cross-piece is a lamp, of which one is blue, and the other red; while a white lamp is fixed in the middle. When these lights are in a horizontal line, it indicates that the helm of the vessel displaying the signal is *steady;* when the cross-bar is at an angle of 45°, the blue light being uppermost, it signifies *helm a-port:* when at the same angle, the red light being